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ABSTRACT

This case study describes a broad program of individualized instruction used with a preschool boy exhibiting severe behavior problems. The emphasis of the intervention program was to provide extensive one-to-one interaction between teacher and child. It was designed as an attempt to imitate the common parent-child relationships of children who succeed in school. Observational reports, learning activities, and team meeting reports are included to provide a study in which positive behavior change is reported as it occurred over an extended period of time. (DP)

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AN INDIVIDUALIZED APPROACH TO LEARNING: A CURRICULUM IN SCHLEPPING:

[Judith Isaken]

Introduction

Johnny was 4 years old, a twin, a child who was presenting what appeared to be serious behavior problems. His language ability seemed very poor, or at least he didn't appear to use it to relate to others or to solve problems. We began to observe this child more closely and to make careful plans for his school life.

Johnny's behavior problems seemed so acute that they demanded some very special noticing on the teacher's part.

He spent his day at school hiding behind free-standing objects (e.g. a low bookcase, a cupboard containing blocks, one of those ubiquitous moveable screens in which nursery schools abound). He terrorized the other children by throwing things at them from these "safe" hiding places. Many of the standard nursery school techniques failed to help Johnny find more deeply enjoyable ways of spending his days at school - though in a distorted way, what he was doing seemed to be "fun" for him. Among the often successful techniques which failed to help Johnny were:

1. When he threw things I walked slowly to him and slipped my arms about him firmly, saying, "I am not going to let you throw things at people. Throwing things hurts. I won't let you do that." His response was to pick up a

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block or whatever was handy and hit me with it.

2. This led into another usually successful technique. On such occasions, I picked him up bodily and carried him, a flailing staccato of arms and legs, to the rocking chair.

Ideally, the message telegraphed at such a time is, 'I see you are not physically capable of stopping yourself from performing unacceptable acts. I care enough about you to want to help you stop. If necessary, as it is in this case, I will stop you physically.'

But it is imperative in such an encounter that the teacher guarantee that the meeting not degenerate into a power struggle. Since a teacher is physically bigger, stronger, and more capable than any four-year-old she must see to it that the gentle, loving nature of the encounter be emphasized.

The results of these meetings are usually spectacular. I remember one such occasion with Johnny where it appeared to go along classic lines. We strolled away from the rocking chair hand-in-hand, I set him up at a table with some hammer-and-nail work which he enjoyed as I sat tenderly beside him. But what seemed like four minutes later, there he was in the dollhouse tossing the lighter-weight pieces of furniture at the girls. As I approached, he maneuvered himself with fast foot action behind a round table and then turned the table over on me. As part of the same movement,

he swooped down, scooped up a heavy doll-bed and raised it over his head prepared to throw it. At the same time that I managed (just barely) to wrench it away from him, I was filled with the saddest, most desperate feeling of hopelessness I have ever felt as a teacher. There was such a deep sigh in me! And it went - 'this kid has no limits built in. If he were physically able he'd have killed me just then - and that grin would have stayed pasted on his pretty face too!' I went home that night sick with despair over that boy.

The next day I decided stopping him physically was not right, and that I would very nonchalantly ignore him. I reasoned that he would have to find those limits inside himself, and that my attempts to stop him had simply caused him to escalate each situation, and had put the responsibility solely on me. Usually, my view would be that the ultimate responsibility for stopping a child from doing extremely dangerous, destructive, violent things <u>does</u> reside in the adult. But, in this instance, it has become increasingly clear that while the message I wanted Johnny to get from me ran something like this: "I like you too much to permit you to do dangerous things to others or to yourself"; the message he seemed to be receiving was, "she'll stop me, so I don't need to control my own behavior." Worse yet, the message he sent back to me was, "ah, so you

think you can stop me, eh? Well, good luck trying. Nobody's succeeded so far and I intend to see to it that you don't either!" The ensuing attention had fed his desire to get more of the same, but had not accomplished that for which I had hoped: a blossoming of some built-in limits in Johnny. As a corollary to ignoring Johnny's out-of-bounds behavior, I decided to be very supportive of the positive things he did. (I am sure I strike a responsive chord in each of you who has known a Johnny when I say 'it was mightly slim pickins.') Besides, one day he was teasing one of the meek, mild girls so unmercifully that I blew it - I lost my temper and shook him by the shoulder until he cried. The fact that those tears were so close to the surface (they only took about three shakes to appear) and that the words that went with them were, "I'm sorry, Judy. I'm sorry, Judy. I really like you Judy" made me feel, 'I just don't have it. Whatever this child needs from a teacher to help him feel successful - I don't seem to have it.' I went home grieving, my thoughts filled with Johnny and his monstrous behavior. I asked myself:

1. Why would a child act that way?
2. Is there a regular pattern to his behavior?
3. What does this behavior mean to this child?

All questions seemed to point to one answer. That boy was convinced that he was no good. As pointed out earlier, he

certainly was no good at school things - like expressing himself verbally and problem solving.

At this point, I was working on the language and trying to support his positive behavior and looking more closely at his average behavior. An observation follows.

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OBSERVATION ON JOHNNY

How He Appears to Other Observers

February, 1973 Observed by Jackie Housh

Teacher - Judith Isaksen

Child - Johnny

Johnny cleans inside of buggy with paper towels which Judy has handed him. "We have lots of towels if that gets too wet, Johnny". She hands him one and holds her hand out for the wet one. He continues to clean and hands out several towels. Runs to waste basket and "I'll be here." "O.k.," he says as he dashes into the building. He gets down on knees and with sober face carefully cleans around the nuts and bolts of the buggy top. "I'll be right back. I want to throw this away." He watches 4 boys racing on their trikes with a father who is working with them. He glances up periodically but is mostly absorbed in his work. He gets down on knees on other side and wipes the wheels very thoroughly. Lifts up the buggy lid and wipes the edge underneath it. The race is joined by several other children and their voices carry across the yard. He watches with interest for about 1 minute and then again works at this careful cleaning.

Judy returns and watches for a few minutes. "O.k. lets go." and they get up and he runs into the building. (Observations continued in "A Language Lesson")

A Language Lesson

Teacher personalizes the experience.

Johnny and Judy sit at the tape recorder and listen to other children talking on the tape. Judy says, "I'll take it to a place where there is room for you." She comments as she finds a new spot. "You can tell me about this book."

Elicits responses from the child.

"What happens right here on this page?"

"He don't have nobody to play with."

Repeats his words correcting errors but never draws attention to his errors.

"Yes, He has nobody to play with."

"Where does he go?"

"Cutting an apple."

"What happens when he takes that knife? Does she like that?"

"He cut it."

"And then what happened?"

"Carried it outside."

"What does his Mommy say?"

"I don't know. Put that back up."

Concept beyond confines of the story brought in. Literature does raise broad social issues.

"She sure does. It really scares mothers when

children have sharp knives. So where does he go then?"

"To show his brother." (speaks slowly)

"What does his brother have that Sam takes?"

"A book."

"Does George like that when Sam takes his book?"

"No."

"What does he say?"

"No."

"Then what happens?"

Attempts to get child to label instead of using "that".

"I don't want to play with that. He says, I don't want to play with that."

"Show me 'that'".

"He doesn't want to play with the doll."

"How come?"

"Cause--uh. She tell on him."

Repeating reinforces the language. Models standard English which will be the variety he must learn to read.

"Next time you better not play with my baby doll."

"What does Sam do after that? Where does he go?"

"He went home."

"He went home."

"He went to the store."

What happens next developes sequencing skill.

"What happened then?"

"That man said--'Get out of here.'"

"Which man is this?"

Attempts to elicit response "father". Other familial relations seem quite clear.

"I don't know."

"Then what does Sam do?"

Gap indicates identifying tasks we might pursue.

"He cries."

"He cries, and what happens when he cries?"

"He--that man tells us. . . tells his mother."

"And what does his mother do?"

"Puts a bib on."

"She puts a bib on." "What does Sam do when he has that bib on?"

"He want to sit, go to sleep."

Gently tries to bring him back to story line.

"He wants to sleep? and what else?"

"Uh. I don't know." (slouches in chair)

"Let's see. What happens here?"

"He roll the dough."

Concept of after is brought in.

"He rolls the dough. After he rolled the dough _____?"

"He left."

"He left. Is there anymore?

"No more--just one more picture."

"He laid on the ground."

"He lies on the ground. I wonder if there's any more after that. Do you want to peek and see?"

"He laid down on the rug."

"On the rug? How about on this page?"

"All gone."

It's valid to investigate how things work.

"I'll make the tape go backwards now. I think you can see better if you're standing."

Explains what she is doing as the recorder is used.

Associates words with actions.

"Stop."

"Stop."

Opposites of "stop" and "start" are explored.

"I turn this one to start."

"Start"

"Start"

Teacher says to child "you are important to listent to."

Listening to tape reinforces the experience. Language grows out of a relationship with an adult.

"There you are. Your voice is on the tape."

(They hold hands as they listen. He slowly fingers a tag on the phonograph.)

"I like the sound of your voice, don't you?" She

pulls him over and he sits on her lap watching the tape recorder and smiling.

K..'s loud voice comes on and he smiles. "K. has a loud voice."

Reinforcing identity as a person who can know things.

Johnny has answered a question on the tape recorder. "You really did know that," Judy says. "There was more and you told me."

"More."

Positive reinforcement for knowing a lot of things.

Concepts of "on and off." Promotes understanding of how the machine works.

"You know a lot of things."

"That one turns it on and this one turns it off."

"There is just nothing like listening to your own voice."

Concepts of "backward" and "beginning."

"Let's turn it backward."

"Let's find the beginning."

"It isn't far enough", and she says, "let's find the real beginning."

"That's the beginning."

"I'm going to get something to go with this," and she gets up. Johnny hops up and runs with her. "You can come or you can wait here."

More than one way to know self.

They return with a mirror. She hands it to him and he puts it close in front of his face.

Explores concepts of hearing Johnny and seeing Johnny.

"I hear you. You see you."

A. arrives with a mirror.

"We are listening to a story named Sam."

Child manipulates and explores for himself looking ahead with one eye and behind in the mirror.

"I see her," says Johnny as he stands with his back to A. and the mirror in front of his face. "Do you see you?" (Judy) He turns around and looks at her with eye out beyond the mirror and then turns his back and slowly moves the mirror to see her in the mirror. Turns mirror over and looks at the back of it.

"I see you," Johnny says to A. "Do you see you?"

"Yes," A. says. "I see him," A. says to Judy.

Attempted to re-direct his interest in his own voice; his SELF. Expressed interest in his <u>voice</u>, again hoping to vocus on tha' for him.

"I hear him on the tape," says Judy. He turns mirror over and looks at back again. "I see this," he says and points to wall. He holds mirror with one eye showing and bends his head back.

Says A. is upside down. He is looking up and see what

is down.

"I see up there. She upside down. I see upside down," says Johnny.

Both are obviously working on an incomplete concept of reflection, and what is upside down in relation to their body.

A. says, "The chair looks upside down," and she turns the chair upside down. Then she looks in the mirror to see if she can see it right side up.

Johnny gives the mirror to Judy and runs out.

A. turns the chair another way, still upside down, and sits on the rung. "Let's trade mirrors." They do, and then go to put them back in the drawer.

Understands the routine and is able to join a group.

Johnny sits in a chair by window and listens carefully to a mother explain about meeting time and a surprise. As other children begin to go, he jumps up and runs to the meeting and sits in Judy's lap.

"Next week we are going to make special invitations and invite people to a party," she explains.

Gordon asks about a valentine on the cake. "How about a cake?" Judy asks. They all start to talk at once. Judy says "Stop" several times.

Children are learning the difficult concept of giving up their own needs for that of the group.

"We are going to walk to letterbox to mail the

invitations." "Do you know some of the decorations which go with Valentine's Day?"

"Valentines."

G. tells about his dog, and all listen to his long story about how is mother got dog food and his dog wouldn't eat it.

Judy announces juice.

Later

Challenges the adult.

Johnny hits drum very hard and then backs off, looking to see what Judy will do. Does this several times and gets no response. Beats it harder and harder . . Althought he seems to want to disrupt the group, he looks for a color to match before he yells.

"Who has a shirt this color?" asks Judy. Johnny shouts. "Nobody, nobody!" He tries yelling several times and looks around. Beats on floor. Phillip's drum is moved and she asks Phil to take one more turn and give Johnny a turn, who has been waiting. Phillip gives up the drum and gives S. his other drum stick. Following directions nicely here. Is able to ask for an adult's help. Some peripheral group play.

The drums are put away and Johnny hands his up. Goes to a mother to get his cape tied on and away he goes again. Outdoors he gets a tricycle. G. joins him and they

race around the yard together.

The girls have started a great run and chase, with the boys, and Karen makes the most of it, smiling every minute.

"Superman is here," she squeals as Johnny comes by on his tricycle but rides on to the door.

He gets some response from another child.

"J., you go over there," he says, "O.k., I go inside," They dash in different doors, dash out again. They get on their trikes and ride off again - calling out to each other as they go around the yard.

Johnny sings out as he goes, "Do do do do." Stops by the puddle and talks to J. I can't hear his conversation. Johnny gets down and gets a boat out of the water.

Phillip asks me to play games. "She don't play no games," says Johnny. He then recognizes me and he comes and stands beside me. Phillip and Johnny begin to chat rapidly about what I did with them last time.

Responds warmly to a fairly strange adult.

Off they go and Johnny saves J.'s tricycle. "We're going to have a race," he says. Phillip comes up and Johnny says, "come on. Let's have a race." Phillip joins them and all wait to start together and away they go. Phillip circles wide and meets up with them again. "Come on let's race." Jim says to me, "He has a dog," and I ask his name, Johnny says, "Tricks" over his shoulder as the 3 ride off.

Phillip carrying on about the race. Sara joins in and then says "quit following me." They evidently want her to be Bat Girl and in. Sarah tells him she is not going to be any such thing. Sara says, "Isn't this a pretty horse?" and I ask if they ever saw Bat Girl on a horse. Johnny and Jim tell me about Batman and that Bat Girl rides in a Batmobile, a motorcycle, and "sometimes on a horse."

Johnny races after Sara who has now taken his bike. As she goes around the corner she falls over. Johnny stops and runs the other way although he has done nothing. Sara parks the trike and runs around. Johnny runs after her about 1/4 of the way around the yard. He stops to do something else and she runs back to get his attention. He follows her again and watches her as she sits down on the bench and pulls down her stocking to examine a bumped leg.

"What useful thing are you going to do to clean up the school?" Judy asks. They go off across the yard together and stop to talk to Jim and Phillip. Johnny jogs inside and out again and hides behind the new tunnel. Dashes out and up to Sara who stops to talk to him. "No" she says and shrugs her shoulders. He gives her a pat on the back and they run in. Judy gets Sara a band-aid. Johnny watches very carefully and listens to conversation with T. He tells Sara her name is Alice and she flips and

shakes her head. "She can go fast. Can you shake your head like that?" asks Judy. "Your name is Katie," he chants over and over with Sara shaking her head all the while.

Listens to others. This is a fairly enjoyable exchange and the best contact he has had with Sara.

Sara leaves for stories and Johnny says, "I ain't going to stories." His brother repeats this. Johnny gets 2 paper towels and begins to staple them together. "What's that?" I ask him about the stapler. "I don't know." "It's a stapler." "What's that?" "A piece of paper." "And what's that?" "I don't know." "It's a staple." He staples the 2 pieces of paper and holds it up for Judy to see. "Look," he smiles. "You stapled it together. Do you want your name on it?" "Yes." She puts his name on it. Takes Jim in lap with a book which he likes and talks about going to stories and soon he'll be able to go in the big group. Johnny gets a green crayon and colors his paper. "I'm going to make another one." He goes to get paper. "There's a place for you, too," Judy says. He goes on to get more paper. He come running from the bathroom carrying the papers he has stapled and colored.

He seemed so pleased with it yet threw it away as if it were not important, though he had worked on it almost 15 minutes.

The phone rang and he runs to answer. Gets 2 more papers and throws his work in the wastepaper basket. Comes back to the table and folds the paper into an airplane shape and staples it. It slips and he tries again.

Charles comes by. "Hey, how do you make that?" Johnny doesn't answer and Charles goes to get some paper. Johnny throws the work away again and gets another paper, tries to poke a hole in the end. He is using very dull scissors and he tries and tries. I ask him what he wants to do. "Put a hole in it." "Why doesn't it work?" "I don't know."

He worked very hard at this.

Someone helps him get a hole in it and he puts a string through and ties it together.

Everyone comes out of storytime and goes to door for the bus.

In the meantime the behavior didn't improve. A team meeting was held and the notes are included.

TEAM MEETING ON JOHNNY

March, 1973 - Age 5 years, 2 months

Dirty talk -- mainly to upset adults and also to upset kids. Doing dangerous things -

Throwing whatever is in sight.

Pulls stuff off shelves - laughing if it hits a child.

Throwing hammers and one hit another child.

Very fearful of dogs.

Peers

Likes to bother girls - makes them miserable. Sees T. as a person. Others he teases unmercifully. Does much more teasing of girls than boys. Plays mostly with his twin brother, Jim and with Charles who lives with them.

Materials

Doesn't get involved with materials. Is liking puppets and talking through them in soft way. (Part of Peabody activities planned for him.) He doesn't like books, although he seems to understand stories, story sequencing, reading pictures, etc.

Throws blocks

Likes clay and corn meal.

Likes balls - climbing, tricycles, physical activities.

Sometimes has surprising information. Knows all items on grocery shelves. He can figure out stories from Peabody

picture cards. Revealing information seems difficult for him. Speech has purpose of escalation toward battle. Uses short, concise, unelaborated style.

Adults

Can be held and touched physically, but responds to teachers only. Vacillates between babyish and aggressive behavior.

Goals

Pick most dangerous behavior to work on some behavior modification. "Throwing things which hurt people." Give him clear list of all the options when he feels like throwing.

Example: get teacher; throw balls; special bean bags. Make clear what he can throw at, etc.

Then if he throws things that hurt people, establish with him clearly what happens then. Be prepared to firmly carry that out.

Getting more involved with materials.

Observe to see how much time he spends with various activities. Spend teacher time with him in these activities or make variations on these activities. Try to have parents help with this goal.

Relating more to others and gaining more skills for play.

Try having this happen in the more limited environment. Take him across the hall - around the block, etc. and set up an activity. Have boys join him in those

activities he seems to enjoy most. Try to simplify the situation until you find the environment, the people, and the activity which seem to stimulate his play and verbal interaction. Begin the work on social interaction skills in a setting in which he can respond.

Verbal Skills

Continuation of Peabody materials, etc.

Engaging help of mother

What are mothers goals for him? How would she feel about working with you on "throwing"?

Let's look at what progress has been made by late April.

THE TEACHER FEELS A SENSE OF HOPELESSNESS

The thought which really terrified me was that I was beginning to feel about Johnny as he clearly felt about himself. I, too, was becoming convinced that Johnny was completely unreachable and that he was as bad as he thought he was. I didn't like that in myself at all, but there it was! I considered Johnny a hopeless case.

I turned that thought around, seeking its opposite. What does a child have who is a success in school? A good teacher. To that one the answer came out loud and clear, "It ain't me babe, No, no, no. It ain't me babe."

But it often happens that children do extremely well in school whether they have good teachers or not. What are the skills which such children bring to school with them? How do such school achievers acquire these skills, these skills which enable some children to succeed in school independent of the teacher's abilities? It seemed to me that the answer lay in what the mothers of these children taught them, often unconsciously.

My next task was to analyse that unconscious sort of thing which mothers of school-successful children do and proceed to do it consciously and deliberately with Johnny. It seemed to me that what these mothers have in common is that they "schlep" (drag) their children places - to the store, to the market, to the drycleaners,

to the park, to the museum, to watch the telephone repairmen at work, to the Marina. Such mothers also schlep their children with them around the house as they perform daily tasks - making beds, doing dishes, cooking.

A Plan Evolves

Certainly many of these same sorts of activities had taken place at school. But they hadn't done what they should have done for Johnny. The focus had been different. Desperate, willing to do anything, I wondered what would happen if activities were performed with the focus on the one-to-one relationship between a child (Johnny) and a trustworthy adult (me), both of whom performed daily mommy-like tasks together. Thus the curriculum in schlepping was born.

I began to save those little daily chores which had hitherto been done by me prior to the opening of school each day, or in the late afternoon when school was over for the day or on Saturday. Now I schlepped Johnny with me and did those piddling jobs. On the first day we got in my car, I turned the classical station on for some operatic background music and we embarked on our joint adventure.

We went to a local bookstore to find a book for a course I was taking. I took full advantage of the opportunity to explain to Johnny that I, too, go to school

and how important that was to me.

I learned something about Johnny that day (and I suspect about his mother.) He was easy to take into such places. He never touched a thing, was quiet and extremely "well-behaved". The discovery didn't fill me with joy, but it did make taking him with me simpler in some respects.

After about half an hour we returned to school and Johnny returned to his throwing things and unmerciful teasing. I felt sure what I was doing would never work and was a waste of time - mine, his, my co-worker's who had the full responsibility of school in my absence, the other children who could be getting something constructive out of my time, if only I were spending it with them instead of Johnny. But I decided to try the program for two weeks before abandoning it and on Day Two Johnny and I went off to the neighborhood store to buy pudding for a school cooking project.

I placed him in the market basket and we went up and down each aisle. As we did so I asked him to name items on the shelves. I was pleased to learn he knew many of them and recognized that certain ones were grouped together because they belonged to the same class. He told me that canned peaches and canned applesauce were both fruits, for example. After we had gone through the entire market

in this fashion we paid for our pudding and returned to school.

On the third day we went to the cleaners, picked up my freshly cleaned clothes, drove them home and with the aid of my desk chair Johnny helped me hang them in the closet. We also stopped and visited with my dog. Johnny was very frightened of dogs and I carried him past my dog and made no attempt to directly challenge his fear. This seemed to comfort him. While we were there, the milkman arrived and this afforded us another apportunity for discussion. This time about cows, dairies, where milk comes from, what else comes from cows, etc. Johnny seemed to have quite a bit of this type of useful information at his disposal, though he had been loathe to impart it previously. It was a profound experience to learn this about Johnny and discovering it fit some previously held notions of mine about the role of the teacher. Many see teaching as a way of putting things into children. I am more inclined to view it as a means of getting things out of children which are already in, but locked. It's that process of unlocking which is the teaching art, I think.

On the fourth day we drove to my house. Again, the classical music station provided background for our conversation about landmarks we passed ("There's the house where I used to live, that's the house my husband is

building, my daughter's friend lives there. . ." etc.) Each of these provided opportunities for conversational give and take. One of my hunches has been that children like Johnny are not often provided with opportunities for this sort of conversational give and take. Language on the part of adults is usually leveled at such children for highly specific purposes - "don't do this, don't do that." The adult speech tends to be peremptory, as well, so that the children have had no experience with just plain talking. Nor do they dare consider just plain talking as a legitimate activity. Thus, I was grateful for the time alone with Johnny because it gave us unhurried time for friendly talk around subjects which I felt enhanced and broadened his educational horizons. On this day, I made my first open reference to the music that had provided our daily background concert. I sighed happily, "Oh, I just love opera, don't you, Johnny?" Johnny nodded his head affirmatively in the rear view mirror. I was glad he could do that. Just a few days prior to that I believe he would have shaken his head "no" even if I had said, "Oh, I just love ice cream, don't you, Johnny?"

A Feeling of Success Evolves

With a little beginning feeling of hope, we drove into my driveway, seasoned the night's chicken dinner together, popped it in the oven, circumnavigated the dog, and returned

to school.

The next day, Johnny and I took a walking trip around the block to gather leaves for an art project. Another child had been invited to join us, because I felt Johnny needed to relate to his peers and this was a child he seemed to admire. But I didn't consider the experiment a success, except as it helped me clarify my own ideas on what I hoped to accomplish by schlepping Johnny. From then on all our trips were just the two of us.

Thus it went for two more weeks. There were daily sojourns beyond the reaches of the school for a stated purpose - to buy something, get something to use, to cook something, to fix something, or get someone else to fix it, or watch fixers at work. All of it purposeful, knowable. All of it talked about, before, during, after. All of it for just us alone together.

On April 15th another Team Meeting was held.

TEAM MEETING ON JOHNNY

April 13, 1973

Several significant incidents were described.

1. A small group of children went for a walk. Johnny wanted to go but was not included in the activity. Although he was angry he was able to control his behavior.

2. He had been extremely fearful of dogs. When on a walk, he had been able to control his fear and also was able to respond to the praise and accept it with a smile.

3. For 2 weeks after the last meeting he was taken along or with one other child for some period each day for a walk, or away from the school.

4. Over the 2 weeks he became more verbal. His requests for holding and for physical contact became less. The balance between babyish and grown-up behavior improved.

5. The throwing behavior stopped. The nature of his taunting changed. He still teased Sara, but more in the nature of a game.

6. Just recently Johnny began to respond to other mothers by being able to join a group. Little verbal contact with other adults.

Plans:

Work on relations and contacts with other children now rather than with other adults.

Try to help him get included in groups of boys.

Interest shown in block area. Watch to see if this may be the place to start.

When he gets in a group watch closely to see what skills he has. Can he contribute an idea? Do children listen to him? Then we can get a better picture of what skills he needs help with.

Continue the Peabody language activities.

Display his work to see if he can take more pride in his own efforts. Give him a special place to display it.

Next Meeting: April 30, 1973

With Adults

Seems much more open and receptive to adults. He is able to move in and use materials which the adults are supervising. This means more options for him are open. There is almost no evidence of the earlier antagonistic behavior which seemed designed to get attention.

With Peers

Has been able to join groups more easily. He is follower in the group, but he is not treated condescendingly nor is he fearful about his place in the group. He is better able to initiate his own activities and can initiate contact with his peers. To facilitate this we stayed close to be sure his efforts to get in the group were successful.

Example: He came up to a group and announced, "I'm going to do that too." Mary said, "No, no room." The

teacher helped him find room.

His play is 4-year-old, interactive play. Seems to have leaped ahead. Doesn't just accept roles; he announces firmly what he will be in dramatic play.

With Brother

They don't come to each other's rescue so often. Seemed glued together before. More independent now and Jim seems to have benefited also.

With Girls

Teases Sara much less. His play with girls seems more friendly and relaxed and not so loaded.

Use of Materials

More pride in his work. Made a book - instead of wanting to throw it away he took it home. His favorite activities are blocks (last report was that he threw) paper and artwork, painting, cooking. He now joins in almost every activity.

Language

A Junior High tutor has come once each week. They made a book together. She reads books to the whole group or just to Johnny. They made pictures to go with Johnny's story. He took great pride in 'his book'.

Assistant Teacher reports she didn't believe it was possible for so many changes to occur so quickly in a child.

His work was displayed and he reminded teachers to pin his things up. He also pinned things up himself. (Earlier he threw his work away.)

Using Peabody materials less now, although have been using group language activities and classifying activities. In language activities waited for him to fill the silence. This seemed to help him get started.

Peabody language test scores just came in. There was a 19 point I.Q. increase over the past 12 months.

Plans

Continue to watch for the quality of the ideas he can contribute in the play.

His interest in stories and writing books very high. Stress the mechanics of making letters.

Take a close look at his motor development. The large co-ordination seems off. Check with the psychologist on what measures of motor ability are available.

Take a look at where he is with number concepts.

A Story With a Happy Ending

During the next two weeks, changes continued. The daily time was discontinued as he was able to relate to children and activities in meaningful ways.

CONCLUSION

What were the factors which provided this saga with its happy ending? Certainly the individual attention was very helpful. The fact that the attention took place outside the school setting seemed to mean a lot to Johnny too. The schlepping curriculum, modeled after what mothers did whose children find school success, evidently knitted up some raveled edges in his educational background. It sometimes felt to me as if we were going back to his toddler days, filling in some gaps in his development. This seemed to free him to bound ahead in many other areas of his development and to lay the foundation which made learning possible.